

Border Eagle

Laughlin Air Force Base, Texas ... Together we 'XL'



Air Power
Quote of the Week

"The air power of a nation is what it has today, not what it has on the drafting board."

—Frank M. Andrews

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May 31, 2002

Energy conservation important at Laughlin

By Capt. Harry Jackson

47th Civil Engineer Squadron
chief of maintenance engineering

This past winter held a few surprises with "snow" in the desert and 17 days with the minimum temperature below freezing. April and May have already produced four days with the temperature more than 100 F. And according to Col. Rick Rosborg, 47th Flying Training Wing Commander, it is times like this that Laughlin must be reminded to concentrate on energy conservation.

"Our base has been very lax in energy conservation," said Rosborg. "As a result, our energy consumption

is out of control. As stewards of the environment and of the taxpayers' money, we need to ensure we are working toward conserving energy."

Executive Order 12902 requires all Air Force bases to reduce energy consumption 30 percent by the year 2005 from a 1985 baseline. This is the equivalent of turning the power and natural gas off for 24 hours every third day.

Fiscal Year 2001 was not a good year for the energy conservation program at Laughlin. The goal was 24 percent and only a 20.8 percent reduction was achieved. There are

See 'Conservation,' page 4



Photo by Bennie Sanders

Congressional visit

Col. Rick Rosborg, 47th Flying Training Wing Commander, and Congressman Henry Bonilla, 23rd Congressional District representative, visit during the congressman's courtesy visit to Laughlin Wednesday. The congressman had lunch with Rosborg and attended a wing mission brief.

Chief master sergeant of the Air Force selected



Murray

Air Force Chief of Staff Gen. John P. Jumper named Chief Master Sgt. Gerald R. Murray on May 24 to serve as the 14th chief master sergeant of the Air Force.

Murray will assume his new position July 1, following the June 28 retirement of Chief Master Sgt. of the Air Force Jim Finch.

Finch's retirement culminates 28 years of service to the Air Force.

Jumper said the selection process was a difficult one.

"The selection was difficult because the

candidates were all so exceptionally qualified," the general said. "The Air Force is fortunate to have someone of Murray's caliber leading our enlisted force during this exciting time in our service's history.

"His valuable experience and proven leadership will play a pivotal role in the Air Force's future," Jumper said. "I look forward to working with him on matters of importance to the enlisted force and their families."

Murray, who joined the Air Force in October 1977, is currently the command chief master sergeant for Pacific Air Forces. His career includes various assignments in aircraft maintenance and as

See 'CMSAF,' page 4

Basic military trainee dies

A basic military trainee assigned to the 322nd Training Squadron died after collapsing on the obstacle course May 24 at Lackland Air Force Base.

An ambulance transported Stephen W. Fortune, 31, to Wilford Hall Medical Center where he was pronounced dead at 10:10 a.m. The airman basic was in the fifth week of a six-and-a-half week basic military training program.

An autopsy will be performed to determine the cause of death. An Air Force Safety Board will convene to review the circumstances regarding the airman's death.

(Courtesy of Air Force Print News)

the inside
Scoop

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Commanders' Corner

By Capt. Kevin Mullins

47th Flying Training Wing military equal opportunity chief

Special observances celebrate diversity

How many times have we caught ourselves wondering about the different months of recognition we have on base? We have several that grant us the privilege of learning more about ourselves and each other. Be it Hispanic, African-American or Women's History month (just to name a few), how many of us have actually attended a banquet or other event associated with them? It is so easy to choose to avoid them altogether. We are, after all, in the Air Force and we all know there is only one color in our branch of service, right? We like to say how we don't see people as anything but "Air Force blue." This is much easier than admitting we all have differences, and those differences help make us a better organization.

Diversity is one of the keys to success in anything. If we all looked alike, thought alike, talked alike, etc., think of how boring and humdrum of an existence we would lead. Our various backgrounds allow us to solve problems faster by coming at them from different angles. Yes, the Air Force has caused us to view life from a "blue" perspective, but the years each of us spent in our respective cultures played a significant part in forming how we see and react to the world at large. Hiding behind the thought that we are all "blue" and thus all the same would deny the advantages of our diversity.

Special observances allow us to celebrate this diversity in a way that is healthy and educational. What

better means can there be to learn about a culture you were not exposed to while growing up? In some cases it may even open the door to a part of our own culture we had yet to confront. How many of us are truly experts in where our ancestors came from and why we are as we are today? I can freely admit I am not. If I am not a master of my own ethnicity, how then can I know all there is to know about someone else's?

Some may ask why we need to learn about other cultures. My response would be twofold. First, it is my belief that the day we as humans stop learning is the day we die. My second response to the need to learn

See 'Observances,' page 3

Top Three Talk

By Master Sgt. John Sanders

47th Communications Squadron plans flight superintendent



Every assignment can be an adventure

As a senior noncommissioned officer, I should probably get my philosophy for life from Plato or Confucius. But for me, Dr. Suess has provided a great lesson to live by. In the story "Green Eggs and Ham," Dr. Suess describes a fellow who does not want to try green eggs and ham and fights throughout the book to resist. Finally, he wears down and tastes them and likes them.

What's the lesson? Don't be afraid to try something different. The common thread I noticed at every one of my assignments is the people who got out and experienced the local area enjoyed their assignment the most.

My first assignment was Spangdahlem Air Base, Germany. While I was there I noticed the people

who learned to speak German enjoyed their tour more. Those same people also received more invitations into local homes and learned more about the German way of life. That's when I learned that the local area is not going to come to you, you must go explore it.

I know Del Rio and Laughlin are small and have limited amenities, but Del Rio and the surrounding areas have more to offer than some of us realize. I challenge you to get out and explore it. Go to Mexico, San Felipe Springs and the cave dwellings. Rent a boat and explore Lake Amistad. Find some of the off-the-beaten-path restaurants in town, and I bet you'll be surprised at what you might like. Del Rio has

many secret treasures that are not going to fall in your lap. You must go out and find them.

Every assignment you go on is another adventure which creates a chapter in your life. Get out and make your life story exciting. Don't sit in your dorm room or housing unit and say there's nothing to do. Get out and explore the base. Did you know Laughlin has a nature trail with a fossil bed, a paintball field, horse stables and a skeet range? You have to take charge of your life and make the most of it. Otherwise, when you look back, you will only see missed opportunities. So, as you continue your career in the Air Force, don't be afraid to try the green eggs and ham!



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***"Excellence –
not our goal,
but our
standard."***

– 47th FTW motto

Rising 6

By Staff Sgt. Kasimu Greenidge
47th Support Group
command noncommissioned officer in charge

Mentoring can change an airman

Have you ever noticed the mannerisms of newly assigned troops? Airmen fresh out of technical school have certain anxieties about them. When I arrived at my first duty station, I craved for someone to "show me the ropes." I needed a mentor.

Everyone in the Air Force should have a mentor. Mentors are a vital piece of the puzzle we call Air Force professionalism. Mentors play an important role in a person's life.

In a perfect world, supervisors would take on the role of mentor to their airmen. Some roles are friend, coach, motivator, listener, supporter, advisor, advocate and role model. I believe young people want a mentor to help them in three key areas: advise, access and advocacy. Moreover, as a supervisor sharing your life experiences, you can provide a great source of advice and information to your airmen.

Opening doors to resources is one of the most valuable benefits a supervisor can give his troop. Furthermore, standing up and speaking on behalf of your people is what advocacy is all about. Knowing your roles and expectations are important, but it's not enough information to give a clear understanding of the mentorship role.

I've found there are six different tips to remember while mentoring a person:

- Maintaining regular contact is crucial, especially during the beginning phase of your relationship with your airman. Supervisors must be willing to commit to contributing a considerable amount of time to this phase of the relationship.
- Take time to develop trust. Mutual trust and

respect are not given; they are earned. Keep your promises and speak truthfully.

- Practice active listening and try not to preach; try to be a problem solver.
- Identify problem areas, address them, and give support. Be aware of changes in your airman's individual needs.
- Guide your airmen through the brainstorming process and assist them in the planning of their goals.
- Seek advice from supervisors and peers regarding your troop. This will strengthen your communication and problem solving skills.

Applying these tips to your organization mentorship program will positively impact the development of professional Air Force members.

It is imperative that individuals in supervisory positions value the roles, expectations and key tips of mentoring; the Air Force mentoring program depends on it.

We have all been in situations where we've felt lost or uneasy. The next time you come across someone in that situation, befriend that person; show them the ropes. Try to coach them through obstacles. Motivate them to strive for higher levels of self-improvement. Listen to their troubles. Lend your support whenever possible. Share your personal experience and give advice.

If you apply the six tips for mentoring, your relationship with your troop will blossom and positively impact the development of the Air Force professional.

'Observances,' from page 2

about other cultures is that we live and work in a diverse environment. If I can better understand one of my friends, neighbors or co-workers, then I am a more productive citizen. The better we all get along, whether at work or play, the better we perform as individuals and as an Air Force, state or nation.

Exposure to new and different things is a spice of life. We, as Americans, should treasure that as dearly as we do our other freedoms. We are blessed enough to live in the only nation on the planet founded on morals and ethical ideals. Other countries are based upon ethnic or religious ideals, and this shapes them to be more similar in their

modes of thinking, dress and other facets of everyday life. Even their foods will have similar spices and flavors.

Here in the United States we have a little bit of everything. We truly are a melting pot of cultures and people. This permits us to experience things a person spending his or her entire life in Venezuela, for example, might never even dream of.

If you believe, as I do, that America is a great place, then you have all people here to thank for it. I challenge all of us to take a little time to learn more about what makes our nation so strong. The next time you see a flyer for a special observance, go find out what it is all about. Learn about yourself and your neighbor.

Actionline 298-5351

This column is one way to work through problems that haven't been solved through normal channels. By leaving your name and phone number, you are assured of a timely personal reply. It's also very useful in case more information is needed in order to pursue your inquiry. If you give your name, we will make every attempt to ensure confidentiality when appropriate.

If your question relates to the general interest of the people of Laughlin, the question and answer may also be printed in the Border Eagle.



Rick Rosborg
Col. Rick Rosborg
47th FTW Commander

Base intercom system

Question: What's wrong with the base intercom system? I can hear the sirens, but I can't hear the announcements that follow.

Answer: Laughlin's "Giant Voice" base alerting system was recently damaged by the hail and lightning storms that hit the local community. Specifically, the public address system was not operational the week after the storms. The 47th Communications Squadron made temporary repairs and tested the system, and the siren and public address system are currently working at about 85 percent capability. Parts have been ordered, and we expect the system to be 100 percent operational by the middle of June.

Airmanship

Intended to help all airmen articulate the Air Force's vision of aerospace power

What is maneuver?

Maneuver is simply the ability to position yourself so that your adversary is at a disadvantage. For the Air Force, maneuver puts aerospace forces in a position to deliver overwhelming effect.

Please recycle this newspaper.

Volunteer training set

The Amistad Family Violence and Rape Crisis Center is providing a Volunteer Training Program beginning Saturday. The program will include crisis intervention, medical system response, legal issues, domestic violence issues, children and sexual assault and sexual assault issues.

The first session will be from 9 a.m. to 2 p.m. Saturday at the Ramada Inn Executive Room. Breakfast and lunch will be provided. Sessions will run throughout the month of June.

The Center has several volunteer opportunities, to include administrative and clerical support, children's program, community awareness/speaker's bureau, thrift store, shelter maintenance and advocacy. The training program is required for advocate volunteers.

For details, call Maj. Nina Watson at 298-6464 or Rosemary Smith at 768-0318.

Cub Scouts hold events

The Laughlin Cub Scouts will sell popcorn from 2 to 5 p.m. Saturday at the base exchange. Popcorn will be sold at 30 percent off. Money raised will go to fund the base Cub Scout Pack #204.

A Knights of the Round Table camping trip is being organized by the Boy Scouts of America. All first through fifth graders can join the Cub Scouts and are eligible to camp June 6-9.

For more information, call Tech. Sgt. David Drotts at 298-3475.

Newsline

M*A*S*H Bash scheduled

The 47th Medical Group will host a M*A*S*H Bash at 5 p.m. June 21 at the base picnic grounds. Food and fun will be available for all base people and their families.

Squadrons will participate in competitions for the "Muddy Boot" award. The competition will include a costume contest for any of the Hawkeyes, Klingers or Hot Lips out there.

Squadrons interested in forming a team should call 298-6464.

This M*A*S*H will serve as a fundraiser for base organizations. Organizations interested in having a booth at this year's event should call Maj. Patricia Jones or Airman Shari Loving at 298-6464.

For more information on the M*A*S*H Bash, call Maj. Nina Watson at 298-6464 or Capt. Jolene Norris at 298-6453.

Memorial will limit traffic

Ribas Dominicci Circle will close to traffic from 2:55 to 3:55 p.m. June 7 for a dedication ceremony. The West Gate will close to traffic until 4 p.m.

For more information, call Capt. Sean Sullivan at 298-5162.

Pool party scheduled

The Enlisted Spouses Club will host a summer splash party from 4 to 8 p.m. June 15 at the Friendship Pool. Members and their families will eat free. Nonmembers will pay \$1.

For details or to R.S.V.P., call 298-2180 or 298-7521.

Travel voucher statement

An Air Education and Training Command mandate requires that all travel vouchers now have a declination statement included on the front or back of the voucher. The statement must be signed if a member does not wish to have a portion of his or her travel pay sent automatically to his or her Bank of America charge card account.

For more information, call 2nd Lt. James Oberg at 298-5203.

Tricare appointments

There will be a limited number of appointments available for Tricare Standard patients during the summer staff transition period for the 47th Medical Group. Tricare Prime patients always have priority and non-Prime beneficiaries are given care on a space-available basis only.

Those who have not yet enrolled themselves or their families in Tricare Prime are encouraged to take this opportunity to do so. Patients are encouraged to come to the clinic 15 minutes early for appointments.

For more information, call (800) 406-2832.

'Conservation,' from page 1

several factors that drive energy consumption, including changes in local climate, maintenance of facilities and attitudes and actions involving the use of energy.

The climate of FY 2001 was not energy friendly, with both a longer, deeper winter and more intense summer compared to the climate in the baseline year. Laughlin facility maintenance engineers and technicians are constantly working to maintain, improve or replace the mechanical and electrical systems base-wide. This takes time, training and funding to accomplish, which are not always controllable. However, actions and attitudes of individuals can be controlled and do play a significant role.

This year's energy reduction goal of 26 percent will be difficult to achieve and is impossible without everyone's help. Every Laughlin

member can reduce the energy consumed at work and at home. By following several simple ideas, energy consumption can be cut down.

■ Under a new AETC directive, all work center thermostats should be kept between 76 F and 78 F during the summer.

■ When not in use, turn it off. This includes lights, computers, computer speakers, monitors, printers, copiers, coffee pots, fans, radios, etc.

■ Turn off porch, patio and carport lights during daylight and when going to bed at night.

■ Ensure all computers have the Energy Star features turned on and set appropriately.

■ Use cooling wisely by setting your thermostat to 78 F or higher in the summer, and consider raising the temperature if you plan to be away for eight hours or more.

■ Keep doors and windows shut while the air conditioner is turned on.

■ Close your drapes and blinds during the daytime to protect furniture from the sun and minimize heat transferred through the windows.

■ Air filters that are clean help to keep the dust out of the air, improving your indoor air quality and the efficiency of the air conditioner.

■ Make sure the dishwasher and clothes washer have full loads before running them.

■ Use the "air dry" or "economy" setting on the dishwasher.

■ Wash clothes in cold water when possible and rinse in cold water.

■ Hot air can be hard on clothing, so use the "air dry" setting, or hang your clothes outside to dry. This will reduce shrinkage and make your clothes last longer. If you do use the dryer, clean the lint filter after each load.

With everyone's help, Laughlin can reach its energy savings goal and conserve its natural resources.

'CMSAF,' from page 1

the command chief master sergeant for the 347th Wing at Moody Air Force Base, Ga., as well as U.S. Forces Japan and 5th Air Force, both located at Yokota Air Base, Japan.

The office of the chief master sergeant of the Air Force represents the highest enlisted level of leadership, provides direction for the enlisted corps, and represents their interests to the American public and to all levels of government.

The CMSAF serves as a personal adviser to the Air Force chief of staff and secretary of the Air Force on all issues regarding the welfare, readiness, morale, proper utilization, and progress of the enlisted force and their families.

(Courtesy of Air Force Print News)

DRNH FILLER

Airmen deploy as Operation Enduring Freedom escorts

By Capt. Sean McKenna

Air Force Print News

The "help wanted" ad would read: "Airmen to work 60-hour week in the desert in 115-degree temperatures sitting in trucks with no air conditioning watching foreign-speaking men extract human waste from field latrines."

Any takers?

Fortunately, there are volunteers for this rather unglamorous position. The 379th Expeditionary Civil Engineer Squadron's escort flight at Al Udeid Air Base, Qatar, features 14 airmen whose sole purpose for being deployed for Operation Enduring Freedom is to monitor the work of foreign laborers on base.

"The escorts are providing a service that affects every person every day," said Master Sgt. Ricky Price, 379th ECES first sergeant. "The cleaning of the showers, latrines and the trash doesn't get done without these folks. They're doing a tremendous job of keeping this place functioning well."

Airmen volunteer at their home stations to fill

45-day escort positions and the wing has filled 14 of the 20 positions requested, Price said. However, because of the workload requiring contracted help, escort deployments to Al Udeid will soon increase to 90 days and the total number on base may swell to 40.

The primary duties of an escort are to watch over workers cleaning facilities, fixing vehicles and setting up tents, and working on construction projects such as a swimming pool and trailer latrines, Price said.

Staff Sgt. Ebony Gibbs, a public health specialist from Scott Air Force Base, Ill., volunteered as an escort because she "wanted the experience and wanted to be involved in Operation Enduring Freedom."

"I love to travel, so I'll volunteer to go anywhere," said Gibbs, who previously deployed to Saudi Arabia and did a remote tour in Korea.

Gibbs has done more than just escort duties. When she arrived, Price selected her and Staff Sgt. Jodi Signorino as flight noncommissioned officers in charge, meaning they were now respon-

sible for the other 12 escorts and had to write operating instructions, create schedules and tackle problems.

"We've really tried to keep everyone motivated, keep morale up," Gibbs said of her leadership role. "We're a really tight-knit group. We work together and we hang out off duty as well."

Six days a week, escorts report to work at 6:45 a.m. and finish up between 5 and 6 p.m. In between they battle unforgiving temperatures under a blazing sun. They do not get a lunch break and cannot have bathroom breaks unless they arrange for a temporary replacement. On days they finish early, their reward is additional duties like picking up trash along a seven-mile stretch of fence line and filling security barriers with sand and rocks, Price said.

Gibbs said that while they don't get a lot of recognition for their sweaty efforts, the escorts all know the important force-protection role they're playing to keep Al Udeid secure. They work with security forces and the office of special investigations to report any suspicious activity.

Air Force releases MH-53 accident report

AIR FORCE PRINT NEWS – The Air Force determined pilot error caused the Jan. 10 crash of an MH-53 Pave Low helicopter near Durango, Colo.

The accident investigation found the mishap was the result of a combination of fatigue and the pilot focusing too narrowly on the approach to landing and not focusing enough on the surrounding area.

The aircraft and crew were scheduled to be part of a two-ship night tactical training sortie that was subsequently tasked with a real-world search and rescue mission to find and assist injured passengers from a Cessna 172 that crashed earlier in the day. The crew located the downed Cessna at about 3 a.m. During final approach to the accident site, the MH-53 crashed into a gully less than a mile from the Cessna.

According to the accident investigation report, the aircraft was operating at the edge of its performance envelope and the crew had performed an extended duty day. Under these conditions, errors in judging speed and altitude made recovery impossible when the helicopter encountered an unexpected barrier of trees.

All eight people aboard the MH-53 deplaned safely, the injured personnel from the Cessna were rescued and the damaged MH-53 is under repair.



Photo by Rob Poteat

Reuniting with Laughlin

Former members of the 4080th Strategic Reconnaissance Wing and their families travel through base housing while on a tour of Laughlin May 24. The 4080th SRW was based at Laughlin from 1957 to 1962. The members of the squadron were the first to live in base housing. The former squadron members also looked at the static displays, visited student pilots and attended a memorial service Saturday in the Anderson Hall auditorium. Fallen comrades of the squadron were honored by guest speaker retired Brig. Gen. Gerald E. McIlmoyle, former 4080th SRW commander. Retired Lt. Col. Joe Jackson, who was awarded the Medal of Honor, also attended the ceremony.

**If you know of or suspect Fraud, Waste and Abuse,
call the FWA hotline at 298-4170.**



(Courtesy photo)

Deployed

Senior Airman Frederick Rote, 47th Communications Squadron communication/computer system controller, is deployed to Prince Sultan Air Base, Saudi Arabia, in support of Operation Southern Watch.

Chapel Schedule



Catholic

Saturday 5 p.m., Mass
Sunday ● 9:30 a.m., Mass
 ● 11 a.m., Little Rock Scripture Study in Chapel Fellowship Hall
Thursday 6 p.m., Choir
Tuesday-Friday ● 12:05 p.m., Mass
 ● 12:05 p.m. and 7 p.m., Holy Days of Obligation
Reconciliation Before Sunday Mass, Wednesday from 7 to 9 p.m. and by appointment
Religious Education/Bible Study 11 a.m. and noon Sunday

Jewish

Call Max Stool at 775-4519

Muslim

Call Dr. Mostafa Salama at 768-9200

Nondenominational

Friday 7 p.m., Unity in Community Services

Protestant

Sunday 11 a.m., General worship
Wednesday ● 12:30-2:15 p.m. and 6 to 7 p.m., Women's Bible Study at chapel
 ● 6 p.m., Choir at chapel

For more information on chapel events and services, call 298-5111.

The XLer

Hometown:

Aberdeen, Md.

Family:

Husband, Staff Sgt. Anthony Williams; dog, Lexus

Time at Laughlin:

4 years, 7 months

Time in service:

5 years, 2 months

Greatest accomplishment:

Surviving on my own and marrying a great husband

Hobbies:

Reading, dancing and watching T.V.

Bad habit:

Worrying too much

Favorite film:

I don't have a favorite film, but I watch a lot of soap operas.

Favorite musician:

Gwen Stefani from No Doubt

If you could spend one hour with any person, who would it be and why?

My father because I've never met him. My parents separated and divorced when I was 2 years old.

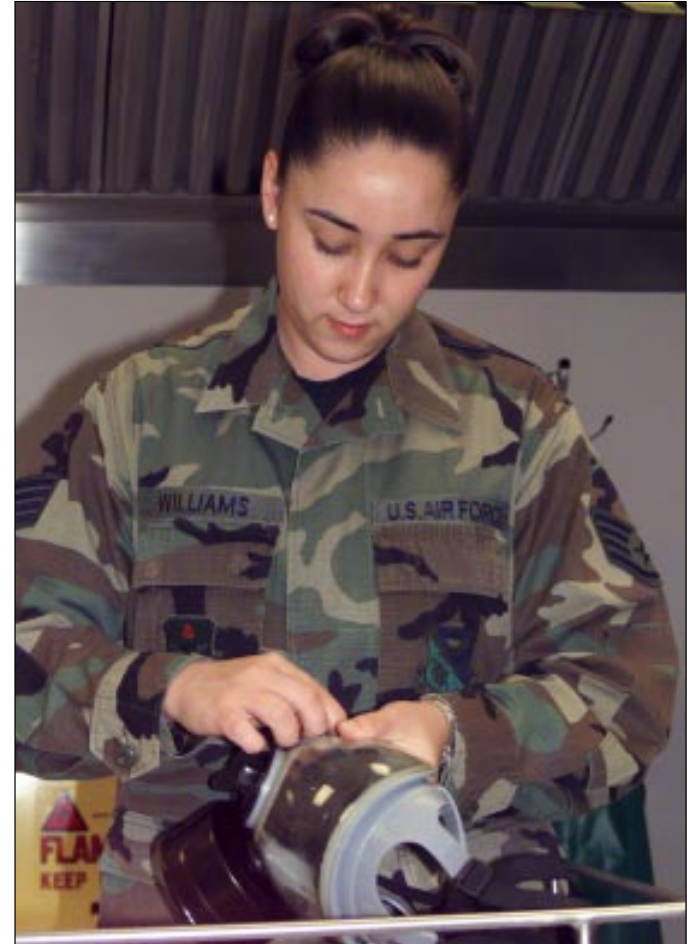


Photo by Senior Airman Brad Pettit

Staff Sgt. Sandra Williams
 47th Aeromedical Dental Squadron
 industrial hygiene program manager



The Air Force rewards good ideas with money. Check out the IDEA Program data system at <https://ideas.satx.disa.mil>, or call 298-5236.

4 x 4 AARONS

AAFES officials recalling toy steering wheels

The Army and Air Force Exchange Service, along with the U.S. Consumer Product Safety Commission and Kolcraft Enterprises, Inc., is voluntarily assisting in the recall of about 17,000 toy steering wheel attachments sold on strollers.

The steering wheel can break away from its base, allowing the small plastic turn signal and horn pieces to come off, posing a choking hazard to young children.

Kolcraft has not received any reports of injury involving these steering wheels. This product is being recalled to prevent the possibility of injury.

The toy steering wheel was sold on Kolcraft's Jeep Cherokee stroller model No. 55120. The model number can be found on a sticker located on one of the rear legs of the stroller. "Jeep" is written with yellow, raised lettering on the front of the steering wheel base. These toys and strollers were

manufactured January through February 2001. The manufacture date is listed below the model number on the rear leg sticker. Strollers manufactured after February 2001, with toy steering wheels, are not included in this recall.

AAFES stores nationwide sold these strollers January 2001 through May 2002.

Consumers should remove the toy steering wheel on these strollers and contact Kolcraft to receive a free replacement toy steering wheel. Contact Kolcraft at 1-800-453-7673 Monday through Thursday 8 a.m. to 6:45 p.m. EDT, and 8 a.m. to 3:30 p.m. EDT on Friday.

For additional information, consumers can also write to: Kolcraft Customer Service, Kolcraft Enterprises Inc., 10832 NC Highway 211 East, Aberdeen, NC 28315.

(Courtesy of Air Force Print News)



Photo by Airman Timothy J. Stein

A boy's best friend

Kyle Kyker, 5, son of Staff Sgt. Michael and Sharon Kyker, plays with one of four puppies brought by Rose Thomas to the Child Development Center May 24 to help during "Living with Things Week." The dogs were there to help teach the children the difference between living animals and inanimate objects.

If you know of or suspect Fraud, Waste and Abuse, call the FWA hotline at 298-4170.

Friday, Border Eagle. Wednesday, this newspaper:
www.af.mil/newspaper

Fatigue causes various ailments

**By Dr. (Capt.)
Lisa Firestone**
*47th Medical Group
flight surgeon*

Fatigue. Exhaustion. Weariness. Lassitude. Languor. Burn out. No matter what you call it, fatigue is the enemy. It can represent a deadly intelligence threat, including loss of situational awareness and complacency. Fatigue can cause errors in judgment and accuracy, decreased response time, blurred vision and muscular weakness.

During his historic solo transatlantic flight, Charles Lindbergh wrote in his journal, "This is the hour I've been dreading. The third morning, it is, since I've slept. My eyes close and stay shut for too many seconds at a time. No mental effort I exert can keep them open. I've lost command over their muscles. I've got to find some way to keep alert. There's no alternative but death and failure."

Despite the lethal effects of exhaustion, its effects are prevalent throughout society. It is estimated that the national sleep debt is more costly than the national debt. Fatigue has been a factor in several accidents, including Chernobyl, Exxon Valdez, Challenger and many instances of friendly fire.

Each year, more than 24,000 deaths and 2.4 million injuries are attributed to fatigue. For airline pilots, the hours between 2 and 7 a.m. represent peak cockpit napping hours. In one study, 70 percent of pilots nodded off during these hours. Twenty percent of these were during critical takeoff and landing periods. In the cockpit, fatigue contributes to difficulty focusing, slower reactions,

missed radio calls, unclear speech, foolish mistakes and reversed radio frequencies.

In an effort to contain the deadly threat of fatigue, there are two main weapon systems. One focuses on promoting vigilance while the other promotes sleep.

When deployed or in another setting in which a full night's sleep is not possible, the following are tips to increase vigilance:

- Short power naps between 10-30 minutes can restore alertness for 3-4 hours.

- Long power naps between 3-4 hours can restore alertness for 12-15 hours. However, after 3-4 days of these, performance degrades.

- Caffeine, found in cola, tea, coffee and chocolate will increase alertness. Avoid caffeine for 5-6 hours prior to sleep opportunities.

- Isometrics and 5 minute stretch periods can increase alertness and reduce muscle cramping. These can be done while seated. Accompany them with deep breathing exercises.

- Bright lights (above 3000 lux) can promote alertness by suppressing the pineal gland's production of melatonin (which causes sleepiness). White, blue and green light works best, while red light works least.

- Tyrosine, found in all protein, especially cheese, may promote alertness.

- Sugary foods may provide a temporary boost, but there is a danger of rebound hypoglycemia.

- Consistently time meals and follow proper nutrition to resist fatigue.

When it's finally time to fall asleep, the following tips help provide proper sleep hygiene:

- The environment should

be quiet, comfortable and void of light and vibration.

- Lie as flat as possible.

Avoid too many pillows.

- Do not eat, work or watch T.V. in bed.

- When trying to fall asleep, envision a relaxing, pleasant scene. Breathe deeply. Alternately tense and relax each major muscle group in your body.

- Fall asleep and wake at a consistent time each day, even on weekends or days off.

- Aim for 7-8 hours of uninterrupted sleep.

- Tryptophan is the precursor of melatonin which helps regulate sleep. It can be found in grains, seeds, legumes, bananas and fowl.

- Avoid excessive alcohol before sleep. While this may help you fall asleep initially, it will contribute to an early awakening.

- Avoid strenuous exercise 2-3 hours before sleep.

Although the majority of fatigue is due to poor or limited sleep, there are a number of disorders that contribute to daytime sleepiness.

One of the most common is sleep apnea, an upper respiratory disorder in which a person stops breathing while asleep. As their blood oxygen level decreases, they awaken and then fall back asleep. This cycle can occur hundreds of times throughout the night, but since cycles are brief, the sleeper may be unaware of them. It is often a person's bedmate who will notice alternating periods of snoring and quiet.

If you suffer from excessive daytime sleepiness, see your physician for evaluation of sleep disorders and more sleep hygiene tips.

For details, call flight medicine at 298-6341.

Sportslines

Softball spots available

All active-duty people interested in competing for a spot on the Air Force men's or women's softball team must submit Air Force Form 303 to the XL Fitness Center by June 3 for the women's team and June 10 for the men's team. Forms are available at the fitness center.

For more information, call Tech Sgt. Rick Horn at 298-5251 or Tom Kerr at 298-5326.

Sports – Play it safe!